teach input drive shafts for vehicle wheels. Instead, the reference teaches one rear axle 7 for both rear wheels. Furthermore, Mezger does not disclose an output drive shaft in operative connection with the transmission and the input drive shaft for driving the vehicle wheels. Instead, the reference discloses a transmission output shaft 20 which directly drives the rear axle 7 (see column 2, lines 21-25 of the reference). This transmission output shaft 20 is part of the transmission 10 itself and therefore not comparable with an output drive shaft 26 according to the presently claimed invention, which is an additional part external to the transmission and constitutes a separate component between the transmission and the input drive shafts for the vehicle wheels. Additionally, the reference does not disclose an internal combustion engine having cylinders arranged in at least two rows at an angle to one another wherein one of the cylinders is arranged to lie at least substantially horizontal, as in the presently claimed invention.

The patent to Mezger '203 discloses a reciprocating engine for a motor vehicle. This engine has a V-construction with two cylinder banks 1, 2. As is clearly evident from Figure 1 of Mezger '203, both banks are arranged at an angle of approximately 45°with respect to the horizontal plane.

The Examiner combined these references in determining that claim 13 would be unpatentable over such a combination. Applicant respectfully submits that this combination of references does not teach the invention as recited in the claims on file. Essentially, there is no teaching in either of the references taken either alone or in combination of an installation arrangement for a vehicle drive unit which includes an internal combustion engine having cylinders arranged in at least two cylinder rows at an angle to one another, wherein one of the cylinder rows is arranged to lie at least substantially horizontally, as in the presently claimed invention. Furthermore, the combination of references does not teach an arrangement having input drive shafts for the vehicle wheels and an output drive shaft in connection with the transmission and the input drive shaft for driving the vehicle wheels, as in the presently-claimed invention.

In view of these considerations, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over a combination of the above-discussed references is overcome and should be withdrawn.

As for the remaining references which were cited in combination with Mezger and Mezger '203 in rejecting claims 15 and 25-26, these references have also been considered. These references also do not teach the features discussed above in connection with independent claim 14. Therefore, the combinations of these references with Mezger and Mezger '203 do not teach the presently claimed invention as discussed above.

In view of these considerations, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections of claims 15 and 25-26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are overcome and should be withdrawn.

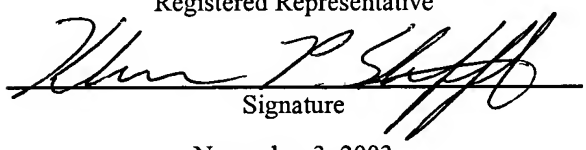
Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

In the event the actual fee is greater than the payment submitted or is inadvertently not enclosed or if any additional fee during the prosecution of this application is not paid, the Patent Office is authorized to charge the underpayment to Deposit Account No. 15-0700.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on November 3, 2003:

Klaus P. Stoffel

Name of applicant, assignee or Registered Representative

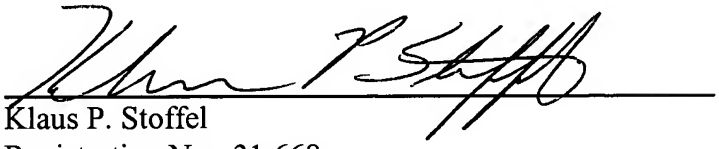


Signature

November 3, 2003

Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,



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